

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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TAGS: PINT VE

SUBJ: COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S RESIGNATION ACCEPTED

REF: CARACAS 6849

SUMMARY. THE RESIGNATION OF COMPTROLLER GENERAL MUCI ABRAHAM WAS ACCEPTED BY THE CONGRESS JUNE 30. FINANCE MINISTER HURTADO HAS ISSUED A DENIAL OF THE ACCUSATIONS IN MUCI'S LETTER OF RESIGNATION. AD AND COPEI LEADERS HAVE BEGUN CONSULTATIONS ON THE NAMING OF A SUCCESSOR TO MUCI, BUT IT COULD BE QUITE A WHILE BEFORE THERE IS ANY AGREEMENT ON A NEW COMPTROLLER GENERAL. END SUMMARY.

1. THE GOVERNING AD PARTY USED ITS MAJORITY IN A JOINT SESSION OF THE CONGRESS JUNE 30 TO DEFEAT AN OPPOSITION ATTEMPT TO REJECT THE RESIGNATION OF COMPTROLLER GENERAL JOSE MUCI ABRAHAM. FOLLOWING THE SUBMISSION OF MUCI'S LETTER OF RESIGNATION TO CONGRESS PRESIDENT GONZALO BARRIOS JUNE 16 (REF), MEP SENATOR LUIS PRIETO FIGUEROA TABLED A MOTION THAT CONGRESS NOT ACCEPT MUCI'S RESIGNATION. PRIETO'S MOTION SUBSEQUENTLY RECEIVED THE SUPPORT OF COPEI AND THE OTHER OPPOSITION PARTIES. AD PUBLICLY REGRETTED MUCI'S RESIGNATION (PRESIDENT PEREZ STATED JUNE 27 THAT IT WAS A SHAME THAT SOME PUBLIC OFFICIALS CHOOSE NOT TO COMPLETE THEIR TERMS OF OFFICE) WHILE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO ACCEPT MUCI'S RESIGNATION

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WITH AS LITTLE FUSS AS POSSIBLE.AFTER ALL PARTIES HAD HAD

THEIR SAY IN THE CONGRESS, PRIETO'S MOTION WAS VOTED DOWN. THE CONGRESS ALSO FAILED TO APPROVE A PROPOSAL BY PCV DEPUTY ALCIDES RODRIGUEZ THAT A BICAMERAL COMMITTEE INVESTIGATE THE ACCUSATIONS MADE BY MUCI IN HIS RESIGNATION LETTER.

2. WHILE THE CONGRESSIONAL SPARRING WAS GOING ON, FIANCE MINISTER HECTOR HURTADO ISSUED A STATEMENT JUNE 29 FLATLY DENYING MUCI'S ACCUSATIONS. HURTADO SAID IT WAS NEVER THE ADMINISTRATION'S INTENTION TO IMPEDE MUCI IN PERFORMING THE FUNCTIONS OF HIS OFFICE. HE CLAIMED THAT THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S BUDGET HAD ACTUALLY BEEN INCREASED, RATHER THAN REDUCED AS MUCI HAD ALLEGED. MOREOVER, HURTADO STATED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN NO PURCHASING IRREGULARITIES BY THE GOV WATER AUTHORITY (INOS). THE FOLLOWING DAY MUCI ISSUED A LENGTHY REJOINDER IN WHICH HE CLAIMED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THERE WAS NO EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW IN VENEZUELA.

3. AD LEADERS HAVE BEEN TRYING FOR TWO WEEKS TO MEET WITH COPEI TO DISCUSS A SUCCESSOR TO MUCI, BUT THE FIRST CONSULTATION DID NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL THE NIGHT OF JULY 1. COPEI EARLIER TOOK THE POSITION THAT IT WOULD NOT DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF A SUCCESSOR UNTIL MUCI'S RESIGNATION HAD BEEN ACCEPTED. AD NOW HOPES TO PRESENT THE NAME OF A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR TO THE CONGRESS ON JULY 6. THE CONSULTATIONS WITH COPEI ARE NECESSARY BECAUSE THE ELECTION OF A NEW COMPTROLLER GENERAL REQUIRES A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN THE CONGRESS. NOT WANTING TO DRAG OUT THE AFFAIR, AD HAS ADOPTED THE TACTIC OF PROPOSING NAMES ORIGINALLY PUT FORWARD BY COPEI TWO YEARS AGO AS A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR TO MUCI.

4. COMMENT. THERE WAS NEVER ANY CHANCE THAT MUCI'S RESIGNATION WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTED BY THE CONGRESS SINCE MUCI HAD BECOME A REAL THORN IN THE FLESH TO AD. COPEI, HOWEVER, INTENDS TO USE THE ISSUE OF PUBLIC CORRUPTION IN THE 1978 ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND HAS EVERY INTEREST IN KEEPING THE MATTER BEFORE THE PUBLIC FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. THEREFORE COPEI CAN BE EXPECTED TO DRAG ITS HEELS OVER THE NAMING OF A SUCCESSOR TO MUCI. THE CURRENT CONGRESSIONAL SESSION, DUE TO END ON JULY 6, HAS BEEN EXTENDED FOR 30 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DAYS AND IT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING IF MUCH OF IT IS TAKEN UP WITH THIS QUESTION. ASENSIO

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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